



A book of poems:
War Poetry
Period in Time
Humour

a word in edgeways II

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About the Poets

Adrian Clifford

Hi, I'm Ady and have lived in Lincoln for fifteen years now, originally from West Bromwich near Birmingham which makes me a Black Country Boy. I class my poetry as being like little kitchen sink dramas, because I deal with real life, nitty gritty stuff. Anyway, hope you like my work and any feedback would be appreciated.

Timothy Gogan

I am originally from Radcliffe-on-Trent, Nottinghamshire. I became interested in creative writing some years ago. I am a Roman Catholic and this probably shows in my work. I am quirky and a bit dark. I try to use words like an artist uses a paintbrush. I want to make people think.

Rebecca Cheeseman

Writing poetry is something that I have always been interested in. I am quite a quiet person and find writing in general easier than expressing my thoughts verbally.

John Swanson

Hello, I hail from Essex, known to my friends as John the poet. I'm unemployed and just now I try to keep myself busy. I have written poetry on and off since the age of 12. I really am glad and proud to be part of this anthology of local poets.



About the Poets

Judy Stevenson

Hello, I was born in Lincoln and have lived here all my life. I enjoy gardening, reading, researching my family tree and of course writing poems. I hope you enjoy reading them as much as I have enjoyed writing them.

Julia Buckby

Hello, I'm Julia. I have 5 poems in this book. Beside poetry I love knitting, gardening and lots more. These are my first poems to be published. I hope you all enjoy reading them.

Frank Barton

Frank, a Lincoln bred poet has been writing creatively since the nineteen nineties, found his voice to poetry in 2011 and to date the most difficult piece he has ever written was this passage about himself.



The World

The world we live in so imperfect
Humans wanting everything image perfect.
Each day on Earth is it worth it?

War and unrest going on each day
Other world problems coming our way
Realising the troubles the world has
Living in the world where times go fast
Doubtful to think if this world will last.

Rebecca Cheeseman



For the Ones that Didn't Fall

This is to celebrate the ones that didn't fall,
The ones that never left the planes at all,
The bombs that didn't explode kill and maim,
They made a difference, they weren't to blame,
War is a very sad affair this true,
Give peace a chance; give it its due,
So many wasted lives,
So many heartbroken lives,
Waiting at home for their husbands to come back,
Waiting for good news, not horribly black,
So thank you for the bombs that never fell,
How many lives you saved, who can ever tell.

Ady Clifford



The Sacrifice

Kitchener said “Your country needs you”
So men and boys all showed willing
And lined up in droves
To take the King’s Shilling.

Down the road they marched,
Amidst the shouts and cheers
Oblivious to the horrors
They’d face the next few years.

Heads held high and flags awaving,
They boarded ship and train.
But many would not see
“Dear Old Blighty” ever again.

What started out as an adventure
Was now not so fun.
And they learnt very quickly
What to do with a gun.

In the Flanders trenches
Amid the mud, blood and gore,
They tried to snatch some sleep,
Before going over the top once more.

At first light the order came
And this once happy band of Brothers
Ran straight through the gates of Hell on earth
And fell screaming for their Mothers.

And so it raged for four long years
Until their weary bodies proud and tall
At last came homeward bound
With memories too horrific to recall.

A war to end all wars
It was supposed to be.
To bring to the world lasting peace
And set the people free.

But it didn't work out that way
And lasting peace never came.
We never learnt our lesson
And twenty years later it happened all again.

Now one hundred years on
We pay homage each November
Standing silently and still,
While poppies fall, in a London Hall,
As we remember.

Judy Stevenson



Poppies

In fields o' many, kids are playing
where now the poppies grow.
Where countless fodder,
were slain and bled, not so long ago.
Fathers, brothers, uncles and sons
lay forgotten and out of sight,
Of the world that carries on with
its day while ignorant of this plight.

Cries of the dying, screams of lead,
heard, where now the poppies grow,
Whilst "patriots" would tell us their 'truths';
well – the versions they'd have us know,
While mothers would weep and children dismayed,
awaiting that note through the door.
That letter of death making widows of wives,
ever spreading more and more.

Blood soaked grass and lifeless meat
laid where now the poppies grow.
They once had names; once had faces
which their nearest well did know.
But the general and profiteers drank of the blood,
yet let none of it splash on their hands.
But the spoils of such carnage were brass
and a few feet of land.

For the children still play in these fields,
where now the poppies grow.
But would they play there without a care
if only they did know?

Frank Barton



Why War?

Why must all Countries go to war?
No peace or understanding any more.
Nations fighting and military action each day,
Conflicts' taking innocent lives away.
On Remembrance Day together we commemorate,
Hoping to end all this unrest and hate.
Our Countries must come together and unite,
To stop all this culture of war and fight.
Peace, understanding and negotiation,
Are all needed to unite every Nation.
Why must all Countries go to war?
Let's end all wars for evermore.

Rebecca Cheeseman



Darkness

Mothers in darkness, their children in bed.
It's a wonder they could sleep with that racket overhead.

Many sent to work on farms while their mothers
toiled in excess, but the Dads were god knows where,
fighting this ruddy mess.

We sheltered under the table or in the iron house.
A regular occasion; an unfunny cat and mouse.

We hide in the darkness even when there's nowt above.
All done for the sake of this country we all know and love.

Silent dark or bright nightmare I know not which is worse,
But I'll tell you this in certain terms, it's like an endless curse.

Huddled in cramped shelters, like insects in a hive,
But it's not so bad in the following morn, relieved when we
wake up alive.

So very often we see our history bombed away. Like a spent
match, a fragment of youth, where we used to play.

So many memories of decades past now blown to shapeless rubble. The helplessness and mortality makes us all so humble.

So many see only debris, where their homes once stood.
Everything they ever knew, destroyed, gone for good.

Frank Barton



Remembrance

Remembrance Day is the November date,
Every year we come together to commemorate.
Mourning those who have lost their lives,
Ending Wars is on our minds.
More Wars are going on each day
Between all Countries come what may.
Rebellious acts are going on daily,
All Wars lead to devastation mainly.
Needless reasons for going to War,
Countries are no longer united anymore.
Endless lives lost because of War are sure.

Rebecca Cheeseman



Stranger

I was shot early this morning by a man I did not know.
I passed away down a trench in the ground, so I'll never
see my children grow.

My life has ended far too soon, cut short by burning lead.
My last thought of my family's grief, when they hear from
the post that I'm dead.

Of the man who took my life, I did not know his name.
But I wonder was he a family man? Will his fate be just
the same?

For my wife, I hope she'll remarry but neither too soon nor too
late. For my children, be strong, be adult, for now there's no
time to waste.

For my parents, there's no consoling, they've outlived their
eldest son, forever haunted, that their dear first-born has gone.

So goodbye to all I know and love. Goodbye to my friends. For
any faults between us, it's too late to make amends.

For you've seen the last ever glimpse of my face and I'll see no
more of you. But I'll be forever in your heart; that much is true.

Frank Barton



Black Rain

With blinding rage of a second sun,
the two fat boys sing their song.
Screeching voices that tear off the skin,
boils the eyeball behind wasted lid.
Thousands dead, some as momentary shadows,
others melted to fleshy meadows,
Murmurs drowned by the howl of the brothers,
inaudible chokes from the “unlucky” survivors.
Walking alligator, blinded, deafened
and nerve ends scorched.
Their paths paved of their friends,
reduced to a fleshy torch.

They drink the black rain to sate their thirst...
through hole, no lips no tongue.
No taste to sense the filth in the drops...

Don't drink the black rain
Don't drink the black rain

Structures collapsed on those who resided,
unable to dodge. Melted, deafened, blinded.
A merciful end from agony, agony, agony.

But those melted mouths found no voice to scream...
thousands or tortured souls, to the Americans,
unheard, unseen.

But this was a prelude, not only a mass grave...
but the start of a decades' long plague.

The boys fell silent, but the horrors remained.
Annihilating lives, indiscriminate, and unphased.

For those who survived,
they were plagued with despair,
with insane tumours and loss of hair.
This modern society would show their offspring scorn,
countless birth defects and many stillborn,
But the military tells us this wasn't wrong,
this was to prevent the war being prolonged.

Frank Barton



One of Those Things

The sun is shining.
Schools are out.
Children are out playing.
Boys kick a ball about.

Girls are skipping
Or reading a book.
The war is not mentioned
By word or look.

The war is back
When the doorbell rings.
Some one is there
With one of those things.

The anguished cry.
The tears that fall.
One of those things
Has spoilt it all.

The sun still shines.
The children still play.
Damn the war
For spoiling the day.

Julia Buckby



Childhood Memories

Childhood memories that have been and gone
You don't seem to be a child for long.
Childhood memories now in the past
As a child time doesn't seem to go fast.
Childhood memories that fade away
As children you think that they will always stay.
Childhood memories that we all can recall
Now distant memories that is all.

Rebecca Cheeseman



Cricket Match

Ball on willow,
Raised voices
Not another six, Gogan
You'll have to get it!
Why do you always have to slog it?
I want to win, and I love the feeling of ball on willow.

Timothy Gogan

Guilt

Guilt! What is it?
It's like a dog gnawing on a bone,
Eating away at you from the inside,
Shame on you!
Shame on you!
Why didn't you do this or that?
It's like a shadow following everything you do,
I hope you satisfied,
Guilt!

Timothy Gogan



Dressed up to the 999's

Pink spiky hair, Safety pins and zips,
I'm into punk not Gladys Knight and her pips,
Leopard Print skin tight trousers, bum straps and docks,
That look could have stopped the clocks,
Shiny boots, holey jumpers, leather jacket,
Must of cost Mom and Dad an absolute packet,
Not just about music, punk was a major scene,
A movement for a generation, rebelling against what had been,
Some people just dismissed it, as being loud, loutish and brash,
But it gave hope to young people, although looked on as trash,
Siouxsie and The Banshees were my favourite band,
One of the most interesting of the alternative strand,
Getting back to clothes and all that vibrant colour,
Life without punk rock would have been so much duller,
It gave me and many a defined sense of identity,
It gave me and many an alternative humanity.

Ady Clifford



Death in the Dust

There is no rehearsal for my way of life, today,
I'm like weak clay in the desert sun,
As I crumble quick away.

I 'm like dust now, you can't see me,
But your TV screens don't lie.
I'm a swollen belly statistic,
Another child too weak to cry.

My future is uncertain,
My life is in your hand.
Don't turn away, don't turn away,
As I crawl across the land!

In different circumstances,
Your child could have been me.
And you my mum and dad and family,
Accepting of our poverty.

Its noon now and the scorching sun,
Beats down upon my hairless head.
Only you can save me,
Turn away now and I'm dead.

John Swanson



Make Time

Make time for yourself
Because no – one else will.
Make things less of a mountain
And more of a hill.

Stand up for yourself
And learn to say “No”
If people aren’t helping
Politely tell them to “GO”

Be kind to yourself.
Sit awhile and dream.
Banish all your thoughts
That make you want to scream.

Make peace with yourself.
Leave the bad times behind.
Reach out and go forward.
Many friends you will find.

Look to the future
And not to the past.
Make time for yourself
And be happy at last.

Judy Stevenson



Country Walk

I love to walk down a country lane,
With gentle breeze blowing, and not a sign of rain.
To saunter in the dapple shade
The sun through the leaves has made.

To hear the birds as each one sings.
The flutter of their tiny wings.
All the creatures on the ground,
Creeping and crawling without a sound.

These are the things that I hear and see,
The beauty that is all around me.
As I walk down that country lane,
In the dappled shade the sun through the leaves has made.

Julia Buckby



Nostalgic

Curves in masonry forged by age. The fingers of frost clawed beauty in the glaze. Crooked slabs and cobbled stone. Full of character, but now most have gone.

Charming old buildings smashed to the ground, leaving only memories of their looks, their smells, their sounds. The streets once alike but for eroded charm, where children played, seeming immune from harm.

We had an outhouse and a coalhouse at the bottom of the yard. The rooftops were the stage for the nightly feline bards. They'd sing the songs only they could comprehend, all throughout the streets, their toneless shrieks would blend.

Countless old streets gone without trace. The new sterile boxes, have no soul, no character, no grace. The games we had were so simple but fun, space hoppers, hopscotch, and sometimes, we'd just run.

No texting, email or video games, we went out to play and had fun just the same. We'd scale on walls, climb trees, and swing on gates. Well what do you expect? I was only thirty eight.

Frank Barton



The Miner's Lament

No longer can we hear the shovel on the coal face,
The act of going down the pit's, no longer takes place,
Maggie made sure of that without turning a hair,
She had no empathy, she had no care,
The miners fought pitch battles on the hills
The police with their bully boy tactics, no frills,
A community destroyed for simply no reason,
Thatcher should have been put up for treason,
No food in their bellies, no clothes, no pay,
Tortured minds to think what would happen next day,
Scrimping and scraping money together to pay for some food,
All because Maggie wanted her way, she was in a bad mood,
The miners should and probably will never forget the day,
That Thatcher closed their mines and left them without pay.

Ady Clifford



God Within You

Strange the quest,
That repeats the task unendingly
No less strange,
The jewel we call life's mystery.

Driven on by the clues,
That arouse our curiosity
And become,
The vehicle on our journey of enlightenment.

That kindred spirit,
Scattered throughout the spices.
That sacred bond,
Chemical and spiritual.

Perfection within us,
God within you
Striving to liberate,
And make you feel part of Him.

On the surface,
And deep below it,
The land, sea and sky,
Meet and hold it.

**The herds, fish and birds,
Exhibit the beauty and diverseness,
Of the wondrous nature,
Of our creation.**

**God- like,
In more than image,
Mankind holds the essence,
The blueprints of truth.**

John Swanson



Lovers

A fleeting look
Is all it took.
A loving touch
That meant so much.

Arms entwined
Your lips on mine.
A stolen kiss
A lover's tryst.

Holding hands
Wedding bands.
Joy and laughter
Forever after.

Two beating hearts
Never to part.
Together for life
As man and wife.

Judy Stevenson



Law and Order

This town needs law and order,
Its people walk in fear.
Day and night they walk afraid,
Of the gunmen full of beer.

They have the sheriff in their group,
The deputies don't care.
They shoot you for no reason,
To help you no one dare.

There is shooting in the street,
Also in the bars.
The sheriff and his deputies,
Are not worthy of their stars.

So they are sending for the soldiers,
And soon they will be here.
They will do away with lawlessness,
And elevate their fear.

Out of all this bloodshed,
Law and order will appear.
The new sheriff and his deputies,
Are there to do their share.

Julia Buckby



La Terreur

“Chop”, the blade drops.
Another head gone, another life lost.
“Slice”, the crowd cheer.
The end of another “Aristo”.
“Squeal” as the blood splatters,
the front of the crowd redder'd
from the last beat of the heart.
The cold breeze, the eyes roll
then the life is gone.

The drum rolls.

Another aristo from the cart,
held in the frame, the blade drops.
He is gone...

The crowd cheers.

The vengeful crowd with blood on their hands,
eyes filled with hatred for they despise, they despise...
The rich greedy aristos, their opulence
and the feasting on all the “pies”.

The drum rolls. Toys for sale, gimmicks and souvenirs.
The blade drops again...and again...

The crowd cheers.

Thousands dead, the peoples' revenge,
these people pushed beyond the edge.

Then followed silence.

No more drums.

No more cheers.

Frank Barton



I am not Perfect

Addled brain
And withered bony hands turn the wheel
Mechanical cogs clicking
“The figures don’t add up, Alice”
“I know Mr Gogan”
“Check the comptometer, check your calculations?”
“I’ve found the error! I have got a decimal place wrong”
“You’re wasted in Lyon’s Tea House Alice”
“I know Mr Gogan”!
“You can go home now Alice”

Timothy Gogan

The Lonely Soul

The lonely soul that sits in his flat waiting!! Waiting!!
It feels the pain of a life long ago
It doesn’t know why – it’s hazy and
Memories are obscured
Like driving on a dark foggy night
But it feels
Pain and wants it all to end!

Timothy Gogan



Brighton Battle

They all congregate on Brighton Pier,
High on energy, adrenaline and fear,
The Mods and Rockers have come to town,
Who knows what's ahead, what's going down?
Pitch battles in the lanes and on the street,
Violent episodes when these gangs meet,
The pack mentality soon kicks in,
Why do these skirmishes take place, why begin?
Mods have their polished scooters and their pride,
Rockers just love the thrill of the ride,
They fight, they roar, they battle in the sand,
Using deck chairs, pebbles, anything that comes to hand,
The lasses join in too, made up to the nines,
But do they really agree with it, reading between the lines,
At the end of the day, what exactly has this fight achieved?
Like all battles it's a tangled web they have weaved.

Ady Clifford



Of that which allows us to be fluid

Of that which allows us to be fluid?
Like a silvery scaled fish in almost effortless motion.
Of that which allows us to be blest?
Like the symbolic bread and wine in Holy Communion
Of that which allows us to prevail?
Like a multi-bricked castle which wards off all evil marauders
Of that which allows us to rest?
Like a new born babe in the lullabied echoes of his nursery haven
Of that which allows us to love?
Like a doomed martyr about to die rather than deny her faith
Of that which allows us to perceive?
Like an uncanny premonition seen in a strange dream
Of that which allows us to have faith?
Like a blind man led by his dog across traffic-filled city streets
Of all these things I rejoice again
Because again they allow us to be fluid.

John Swanson



Good Intentions

My father loved collecting,
And it's rubbed off on me.
I've cupboards full of things,
I can't throw out you see.

My New Years resolutions,
To have a good clear out.
Only last a fortnight,
Before going up the spout.

The drawers are overflowing,
With things I do not need.
I try to have a tidy up,
But never quite succeed.

My wardrobe's packed right to the top,
And I dread opening the door.
Because when I do all my clothes,
End up in a heap on the floor.

I must really preserve,
And give things the old heave ho.
Although I will be sad,
When they finally all go.

Now I've emptied every cupboard,
Which is absolutely ace.
But now I'm wondering what to do,
With all that great big space!!!

Judy Stevenson



Birthday

40 today!
It's my birthday, earth day;
I feel so strange
Proud and yet quite bewildered

Now I know
Now I realise
My potential must be explored
Used fully, without anymore hesitation

I've crossed the river over into the maturity
Reached the most important crossroad in this life
Experienced much, but remain
To experience even more

In spite of regret or sorrow
In the wake of mistakes
I will conquer with God's help
All and every diverse adversary

Now the road ahead is straight
I will not hesitate
Or look back
Each moment of sweet sanity a true blessing

Light allow me fuller blessing
And this land, so hard and dark
Through higher goals in man, seem lessening
Hope will dawn soon, in their hearts

Love is lacking, but I sense that
Sweet old knowing, live and strong
That which seems defeated, down- trodden
Will Phoenix - like be born again

How my years have been a mentor
Teacher, task master, wiseman, king
And I have been their willing pupil
As into me their life they sing

Truly, I have tried to love all
Who would allow me, to sometimes, bare my soul
I have seen God's splendor and glory
Which reveal that there can be no greater goal

John Swanson



I am in a Rush

“I can’t stop to talk I am late for work”
“I’m taking the kids to school”
“Sorry! I’m busy come back later”
Busy, busy, always in a rush
But what are we waiting for?
Don’t you realise that we’ll all die!
To dust we’ll return.
Then we’ll be
Nothing!
Nothing!
Nothing!

Timothy Gogan



Old Father Time

A man is in the park watching children play.
He is old and knows he hasn't got long left.
The sun beats down on his head. It is summer.
Many years ago he had a wife and son.
Both died in tragic circumstances.
He hears a voice in the distance calling him.
“Bill”. How good it is to see you!
It is a childhood friend. “Bill it's been 20 years” How are you?
I'm ok, Tom, just day dreaming.
“Come for a cup of tea, Bill”
“I don't want to, I want to stay in the park”
“I understand Bill. But if there is anything
I can do to help, just ask me”
Nothing! Thanks Tom and closes his eyes.

Timothy Gogan



Dystopian World

All seeing eyes everywhere.
Listening ears all around.
Big brother is watching you.
This is a dystopian world.
Computers humming,
Frantic fingers drumming the last ounce of data into the ominous
machines
“Watch what you do”
“Watch what you say”
Or else!
They’ll be trouble.
This is our world.
The modern world.

Timothy Gogan



Does your Chewing Gum...?

Chewing gum sounds like wellies stuck in the mud,
Masticating molars or cows chewing the cud.
Seems they've made fruity flavours into chewing gum,
Lovely jubbly taste sensation, 'til the flavours gone.
Fools the brain into thinking your body needs
more food between your teeth
Maybe menu cards should list chewing gum as an aperitif.
Sugar - free and dental gum, what will they dream up next?
Maybe they'll create a gum to help the undersexed.
When I was a boy I recall, almost breaking my teeth on gum,
To secure a set of 'Flags of The World', I'd often pester Mum.
It's odd to think recently in Russia. Money spent
On chewing gum was viewed by many as being decadent.
Marlon Brando always chewed in films like 'The Wild One'
Maybe his muffled voice was caused by gum
wrapped around his tongue?
Remember when, way back in school,
you would chew a bubble gum,
As if your teacher never knew where the
bubble-bursting came from.
In the pinball arcades, with cola drinks,
I recall the spearmint taste on lips

That hid under my under aged beery drinkers breath.
Yesterday, it's true, I saw a new South American gum sensation
Which promised 'unlimited energy' right across the nation?
So in the balance, pros and cons,
when all is said and chewed,
Gum is the favourite Elixir of Youth,
the skinny kids' diet food.

John Swanson



Little Green Frog

I went for a walk this morning
You'll never guess what I found.
A little green frog with a hat on,
Hopping and skipping around.

He wished me a very good morning,
“Sweet lady would you kindly oblige.
Give me a kiss lovely lady,
And you will get a lovely surprise.”

I kissed him and all of a sudden
With a flash that dazzled my eyes.
For right there before me
Stood a man with beautiful brown eyes.

He said “Thank you my charming young lady
The spell you have broken at last.
A curse that was put upon me,
Punishment for my wicked past.”

“I am asking that you will marry
This charming young fellow you see.
To love and to cherish for ever.
So that happy forever we'll be.”

Julia Buckby



Thomas

Thomas was a scaredy cat.
A very timid puss.
He cowered in his basket.
He really was a wuss.

His owner tried to make him brave,
And kicked him out the house.
But Thomas just turned tail and ran,
When he came face to face with a mouse.

But then a cat called Lady,
Moved in next door but one.
And Thomas, he was smitten.
He fell in love headlong.

When lady had a visit,
From Big Ginger down the road.
Thomas twirled his whiskers,
And up to him he strode.

They circled one another,
With hisses, growls and spit.
Until Big Ginger fled in fear,
And beat hasty flirt.

Now Thomas has his Lady,
And all his fears have gone.
He's the cat that got the cream,
And become the local icon.

Judy Stevenson



Santa's Suit

The elves in Santa's workshop,
Had to laugh a bit.
He was trying on his Santa suit,
And found it would not fit.

His tummy wobbled as he laughed,
His face lit by a grin.
He was trying hard, his very best,
To hold his tummy in.

He tried to do some push ups,
It did not help him much.
Nor did running on the spot,
Skipping, jumping, Boxing and such.

I'll have to diet wife, he said,
By Christmas it must fit.
But every cake and chocolate bar,
He had to have a bit.

So, Santa's wife without a qualm,
All the seams let out.
And wondered with a great big sigh,
What all the fuss had been about.

Julia Buckby

A word in edgeways poetry group
meet weekly at DevelopmentPlus,
Croft Street, Lincoln.

If you would like to find out more
about the group or are interested
in joining then please call
01522 533510 or email
enquiries@developmentplus.org.uk

